

Royal Mail International Update

August 2019

This update, about incidents which have affected international mail services throughout August, was issued by Royal Mail Customer Services on Tuesday 10 September 2019.

Information about issues currently affecting the movement of international mail, including international bank holidays, can be found at: www.royalmail.com/internationalupdates.

Africa

Democratic Republic of Congo

Start date: 16 July 2019

End date: 5 August 2019

Our supplier temporarily stopped accepting mail to the Dem. Rep Congo. However, normal service was resumed in early August. During this time mail was held, so mail backlogs were expected to be cleared within a week of service resuming.

Libya

Start date: 16 July 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Libya are currently suspended until further notice.

South Africa

Start date: 1 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

Very poor service has been observed for mail into South Africa. South Africa Post Office has advised this is due to abnormally high volumes of mail.

This has created bottlenecks in their processing locations due to space constraints and processing capacity. The communicated recovery plan expected at the end of October does not look to have resolved the issues and with the peak Christmas volumes, this is likely to increase delays. Delays are approximately 35 days.

Sudan

Start date: 16 July 2019

End date: Ongoing

Our supplier has temporarily stopped accepting all mail and parcels to Sudan. While we try to establish the cause of the issue with our supplier, we will continue to accept mail to Sudan, but this will be held, until this is resolved, so delays will be expected.



Royal Mail International Update – August

Asia

Bhutan

Start date: 25 June 2019

End date: Ongoing

It's the start of the monsoon season and heavy rain has resulted in flooding and landslides, which have blocked roads in most parts of the country. This means all inbound mail will face delays.

China

Start date: 8 August 2019

End date: 3 September 2019

Typhoon Lekima hit Shanghai and the neighbouring Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Shandong provinces on 8-10 Aug, causing several flight delays and cancellations. Many areas flooded and evacuated, which resulted in disruption to mail services for nearly a month.

Hong Kong

Start date: 31 July 2019

End date: 2 August 2019

The processing and delivery of mail was affected following a tropical cyclone which hit on the 31 July. As a result, a delivery delay of 24/48 hours was expected on all mail & parcel products.

Hong Kong

Start date: 3 August 2019

End date: 20 August 2019

A series of public events, resulted in road blocks in major areas of Hong Kong, and caused disruption to the processing of all mail services (inbound and outbound).

Nepal

Start date: 9 August 2019

End date: 14 August 2019

Nepal Post advised us the General Post Office in Kathmandu was being relocated from Sundhara (postcode 44600) to Dillibajar (44605). As a result, the office was closed for parcels and Express Mail Service processing from 9 to 14 August 2019. Letter services functioned as normal.

Syria

Start date: 6 December 2012

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Syria are currently suspended until further notice.

Vietnam

Start date: 2 August 2019

End date: 5 August 2019

The processing and delivery of mail was affected for a few days following the effects of Tropical Storm Wipha, which hit the country on 2 August 2019.

Australasia

No incidents reported.

Royal Mail International Update – August

Europe

Finland

Start date: 30 August 2019

End date: 5 September 2019

Strike action by Postal workers was expected to cause delays of up to 24 hours to some parcel deliveries on Friday 30 August 2019 in the regions of Tampere, Vantaa and Jyväskylä.

Further strike action was also planned from Sunday 1 to Wednesday 4 September 2019, with delays to deliveries expected.

France

Start date: 24 August 2019

End date: 26 August 2019

Due to the G7 summit which takes place in Biarritz, France, from 24–26 August 2019, there will be impact to mail transportation and delivery as follows:

- No parcel delivery in the commune of Biarritz (postcodes 642XX) from 24 to 26 August
- Disrupted delivery in the following communes: Hendaye, Ascain, Mouguerre, St Martin de Seignanx, Boucau, Tarnos (postcodes 64300, 64310, 64700, 64900, 40390, 40220) from 24 to 26 August
- Reinforced delivery service as of 27 August

As a result, delivery delays can be expected for the duration of the G7 Summit in the above areas.

Italy

Start date: 1 February 2017

End date: Ongoing

We have become aware of processing delays on all inbound international traffic arriving in Italy.

To reflect the current transit times, we are temporarily extending our delivery aims as follows:

Untracked products: 6–8 working days; Tracked products: 4–6 working days and Tracked and Signed For products: 5–7 working days.

Italy

Start date: 5 August 2019

End date: 9 August 2019

There was additional maintenance work at a local airport, consisting of two closures. The first on the night of Monday 5 August and the second on the night of Thursday 8 August.

Norway

Start date: 1 August 2018

End date: Ongoing

Norwegian Post has confirmed their International Mail Hub due is continuing to experience delays following modernisation.

Although there have been improvements, a proportion of Tracked mail is still experiencing delays daily. Norwegian Post has confirmed further enhancement activities are planned for processing improvements.

Royal Mail International Update – August

Portugal

Start date: 12 August 2019

End date: Ongoing

Portuguese fuel-tanker drivers have sent a notice of a strike starting 12 August for an undefined period. This strike will affect airport operations and while Portugal Post has contingency plans in place to mitigate impact to mail operations, the quality of service may be affected during the strike period and delivery delays may result.

Switzerland

Start date: 5 August 2019

End date: 13 August 2019

High passenger demand resulted in capacity issues in transporting mail at some airports, with delays of 24-48 hours experienced.

Sweden

Start date: November 2017

End date: Ongoing

Delivery scanning of 'Tracked' has improved in recent months, however it still isn't where it's expected to be and we'd recommend customers use Tracked & Signed services to Sweden for more reliable tracking information.

Ukraine (Crimea & Sevastapol)

Start date: 18 March 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Crimea and Sevastapol are suspended until further notice.

Latin America & Caribbean

Barbados

Start date: 27 August 2019

End date: 29 August 2019

With the approach of Tropical Storm Dorian, Barbados was under national shutdown from Monday 26 August 2019. This affected all mail coming into and leaving Barbados.

Brazil

Start date: 16 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

We've been advised that there are currently delays with mail in to Brazil. We believe this may be due to industrial action, however this is yet to be confirmed. However, what we can say is that any mail posted in the last 5-7 days could be in a backlog and any mail affected may experience at least a 10 day delay from posting to delivery.

We are taking steps to re-route where possible and expect any new postings from the end of this week to be clear of the backlog, but could still be subject to some delay in delivery of 3 days or more.

Royal Mail International Update – August

Venezuela

Start date: 4 July 2017

End date: Ongoing

The local situation has disrupted mail flows into Venezuela and our supplier has had to stop delivering mail in to Venezuela. As a result, we can no longer accept any mail for Venezuela, any mail on hand will be returned to sender.

We don't know when the situation will change, but we will look for alternative ways of getting mail in to Venezuela.

Middle East

Yemen

Start date: 27 March 2015

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Yemen are currently suspended until further notice.

North America (USA & Canada)

Canada

Start date: 9 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

What's the issue?

Canada Post are experiencing delays to delivery services due to high volumes of incoming mail. Delivery aims for Royal Mail services for Canada are normally 5-7 working day, however, International Standard and International Tracked & Signed are severely delayed, taking 3-4 weeks to be delivered.

What alternative is there?

If you have been posting using our Royal Mail 'Tracked and Signed service', we highly recommend you use our 'Tracked service' option which is providing much speedier processing and delivery times. Simply select the correct service and label. If you are not set up on our Tracked service, please talk to your usual Royal Mail contact who will help you with the next steps. Finally for our Customers using the Post Office to send your items, simply ask for a "Tracked service" at the counter.

A note about Customs in Canada

Whilst Customs clearing processing times are totally outside our control, it is worth remembering that Canada is one the countries with the lowest de-minimis of 20 Canadian Dollars (circa £11). This means that any goods equal or above that value will systematically go through a clearance process thus creating additional delays. Most of what our customers send is under DDU (Delivered Duty Unpaid) meaning that the recipient is responsible to pay any duty or taxes. Read more on our country guide [page royalmail.com/canada](http://royalmail.com/canada), thank you.

Other

Ascension Islands/Saint Helena

Start date: 6 February 2018

End date: Ongoing

Air transportation to the Ascension Islands/St Helena is currently reduced due to ongoing runway work. Unfortunately, given the location of the countries, there is no viable alternative which would arrive any earlier. Although, customers can continue to send mail there will be significant delays in the delivery of all products. Please note: Mail to the Falkland Island is not affected.

Royal Mail International Update – August

Help and advice

More information about Royal Mail's international products and services is available on our [royalmail.com/international pages](https://royalmail.com/international/pages). Alternatively, if you're a business customer you can contact your usual Royal Mail service contact or call our dedicated Business Centre on 08457 950950. If you're a residential customer, you'll need to call 03457 740740.

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